



AVOID DUI Task Force Riverside PRESS RELEASE



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This Fourth of July, “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” by Riverside Police Department

Riverside, CA— The Fourth of July is one of America’s favorite holidays, and why not? Families and friends gather to celebrate our country with food, parades, parties, picnics and fireworks.

Yet there is a very dark side to this great holiday. For many, the celebration includes alcohol, and the holiday can quickly go from festive to fatal when people choose to drive after drinking. From 2009-2013, nearly 40 percent of ALL traffic fatalities over the Fourth of July period occurred in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes. Of the five major holiday periods of the year in California, the Fourth of July ranks as having the highest daily fatality rate.

Over the Fourth of July holiday period in 2013 alone (6 p.m. July 3rd to 5:59 a.m. July 8th), there were 199 people killed in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes on our nation’s roads, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). In California, 28 individuals were killed in alcohol-involved crashes.

To crack down on impaired driving this Fourth of July, Riverside Police Department will be out in full force, aggressively targeting those who put lives in danger. DUI Saturation Patrols will be deployed during the holiday weekend and all patrol officers will be alert to the tell-tale signs of an impaired driver. “This Fourth of July holiday, you can show your patriotism by helping to make Riverside Roads safer for everyone,” said Sergeant Tipre.

NHTSA data shows that 10,076 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes in the United States in 2013—representing almost a third of all crash fatalities. By comparison, during the Fourth of July period that year, 39 percent of all crash fatalities involved alcohol-impaired drivers.

The rate of high Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) impaired driving is astounding. In fatal crashes during the Fourth of July period in 2013, more than one-fifth (21%) of involved drivers or motorcycle operators had BACs of .15 or higher—almost twice the legal limit.

NHTSA data also reveals that 35 percent of young drivers (18 to 34 years old) were driving drunk (BAC of .08 or higher) in fatal crashes over the Fourth of July period in 2013. Motorcycle operators are also overrepresented as the highest percentage of alcohol-impaired drivers in fatal crashes. In 2013, more than one-quarter (27%) of motorcycle operators in fatal crashes had BACs of .08 or higher.



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Drunk drivers are more common at night, too. Over the Fourth of July holiday in 2013, more than two fifths (42%) of the drivers in nighttime fatal crashes (6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.) were alcohol-impaired, as compared to 13 percent of drivers in fatal crashes during the day.

If you're caught driving drunk or drug-impaired, you will be arrested. Aside from putting your life and the lives of others at risk, driving impaired can also lead to serious consequences. A DUI arrest can result in time in jail, loss of your license, and steep financial expenses; the average DUI costs about \$10,000.

Law enforcement region-wide is asking for everyone's support this holiday weekend and all summer long:

- Plan a safe way home before the fun begins.
- Before drinking, designate a sober driver.
- DDVIP: The California Office of Traffic Safety DDVIP mobile app is now available for free download on iOS and Android devices. Launched last year, the new DDVIP app offers enhanced features, allowing users to "Map a Spot" with their current location to find DDVIP partnering establishments in their area or a "List of Spots" to search all participating bars and restaurants throughout California. Users can stay up-to-date with the latest from DDVIP and see what other users are saying via its social tab. Also through the app, for those who want to imbibe but also make it a point to plan ahead, users can easily order a sober ride from Uber, Lyft or Curb – all from one screen.
- DRUGS, MEDICATION & ALCOHOL= CRASHES: Recent statistics reveal that 30 percent of drivers in fatal crashes had one or more drugs in their systems. A study of active drivers showed more tested positive for drugs that may impair driving (14 percent) than did for alcohol (7.3 percent). Of the drugs, marijuana was most prevalent, at 7.4 percent, slightly more than alcohol.
- If you happen to see a drunk driver on the road, don't hesitate to "Report Drunk Drivers! Call 911!"
- If you know someone who is about to drive or ride while impaired, take your friend's keys and help your friend make other arrangements to get to where he or she is going safely.

Funding for the special DUI operations is by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The Avoid DUI Task Force will deploy checkpoints and DUI patrols next during the August/Labor Day DUI Mobilization.

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